

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 SCS-03 INT-05 SCCT-01 COME-00

CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SY-04 FEA-01 OES-03

/038 W

----- 119774

R 070601Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2227

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ADDIS ABABA 14579

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CPRS EMIN ET

SUBJECT: DISCONTINUANCE OF TENNECO EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES
IN ETHIOPIA

REF: STATE 266437

1. TENNECO'S GENERAL MANAGER ROBERT BOGAN CONFIRMED THAT TENNECO DISCONTINUING EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA. WHILE POLITICAL SITUATION HAS MOVED DATE OF DISCONTINUANCE FORWARD, TENNECO IN ANY CASE HAD TENTATIVELY PLANNED TO DISCONTINUE EXPLORATION AFTER FIRST OF THE YEAR OWING TO LACK OF SUBSTANTIAL DISCOVERIES. OIL DRILLING RIG WILL PROBABLY BE AIRLIFTED TO DJIBOUTI REPEAT DJIBOUTI. THIS ACTION BEING TAKEN NOW AS TENNECO HAS HERCULES AIRCRAFT CURRENTLY IN COUNTRY. BALANCE OF TENNECO PROPERTY RELATED TO EXPLORATION WORK WILL BE SURVEYED TO DETERMINE WHAT ITEMS WILL BE EXPORTED AND WHAT ITEMS WILL REMAIN ETHIOPIA. SHUTDOWN ALSO INCLUDES SEISMIC SURVEYING ACTIVITIES. TENNECO WILL, HOWEVER, MAINTAIN SMALL OFFICE IN ADDIS ABABA.

2. GENERAL REASSESSMENT OF EXPLORATION RELATED DATA DEVELOPED THUS FAR WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN HOUSTON TO DETERMINE IF
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FURTHER EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES WARRANTED. THIS REASSESSMENT

WILL TAKE FROM 6 MONTHS TO 1 YEAR.

3. BOGAN INFORMED ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT (VICE MINISTER OF MINES AND PUBLIC WORKS, ATO HAILU YIMENU) OF TENNECO INTENTIONS ON DECEMBER 3. ACCORDING TO BOGAN, ATO HAILU AKED BOGAN IF TENNECO DECISION POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, I.E., RELATED TO USG REVIEW OF USG PROGRAMS IN ETHIOPIA. BOGAN ASSURED HIM THAT IT WAS NOT. H.E. BRIGGEN TEFERI BENTI, NEW PMAC CHAIRMAN, HAS INDICATED HIS DESIRE TO MEET WITH BOGAN BUT HAS APPARENTLY NOT BEEN ABLE TO FIND TIME IN HIS SCHEDULE; EVERY TIME MEETING ARRANGED TEFERI CANCELS IT. BOGAN BELIEVES THERE WILL BE NO MAJOR DIFFICULTIES WITH ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT AS TENNECO HAS MORE THAN MET ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER CONCESSION AGREEMENT.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY DOES NOT PROPOSE TO TAKE ANY ACTION REGARDING TENNECO'S DECISION. IN EMBASSY VIEW, BOGAN HIGHLY COMPETENT INDIVIDUAL WHO WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO MANAGE DISENGAGEMENT OF TENNECO EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES WITH MINIMUM OF FRICTION.

WYMAN

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Message Attributes

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